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ABSTRACT

Directed at the inquiring practitioner, this paper defines the Outward Bound (OB) process; presents a summarial schema of that process; and provides examples of process application. The OB process definition encompasses the following: the learner must demonstrate motivational readiness (appropriate manifestations of willingness and ability to share sentiments) before he is placed in a unique physical environment (outdoors or other contrasting with the learner's home environment) and a unique social environment (a ten-man or primary group affording opportunity for group consciousness/objective, autonomy/individuality, conflict/resolution, and reciprocity). The group is then given a characteristic set of problem solving tasks (prescriptive/organized, incremental/sequential/progressive, concrete/recognizable, manageable/solvable, consequential/worthwhile, holistic/complementary utilization of affective, cognitive, and psychomotonic domains); a state of adaptive dissonance is then produced (adapting includes succumbing, coping, or thriving). Thriving means mastery and mastery will be accomplished when the learner is motivationally ready, alert in a novel environment, bolstered by a supportive primary group/instructor, and presented problems which are structured to facilitate mastery. Mastery results in the reorganization of the learner's experience in terms of meaning (self-awareness, self-esteem, and belongingness) and direction (repeated "modeling" of problem solving behavior) that, hopefully, will facilitate an "outward bound" orientation to living and learning. (JC)

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# The Exploration of the OUTWARD BOUND Process

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## INTRODUCTION

This paper is an attempt to identify the principles of the process conducted by the six OUTWARD BOUND schools. We know of no descriptors that can adequately entitle it, so we call it simply OUTWARD BOUND because of its association with the schools. (Adventure-based education is our best supplemental description.)

There seems to be a lot of misunderstanding as to what constitutes the OUTWARD BOUND process. It is not something which is necessarily twenty-three days in length; has training, expedition phases, a solo, final expedition, and a marathon; or is conducted by an OUTWARD BOUND school. Such a time frame, activities, and phases are connected with a standard OUTWARD BOUND course. They were all deduced, whether tacitly or explicitly, from the principles of the OUTWARD BOUND process. Nor is it the values, such as: self preservation, self actualization, perseverance, initiative, reflection, experimentiveness, etc. These values which are expressed often through and about participation in an adventure-based

educational experience like OUTWARD BOUND are important, but they do not give a practitioner much operational leverage. Indeed, they do or could apply to other processes as well. Instead we are talking about the structures, components, and conditions whose presence and interaction insure that an experience is educative along the lines of OUTWARD BOUND (i.e. aids the persons involved in reaching the objectives intended). We are reminded of a pertinent allegory.

In one of our undergraduate colleges a student was for five dollars able to take off, fly, and land a small plane (with, of course, a qualified instructor alongside at the ready in an emergency). There were feelings of achievement and exhilaration (not unlike those of an OUTWARD BOUND student); yet, he knew next to nothing about flying. To fly alone, in any aircraft, or respond in an emergency, he would have to understand the principles of flight and to have practiced them. The values that he would cultivate by flying would help him be a better pilot but knowledge of them would be a poor substitute for an applicable understanding of the fundamentals of flight. This paper then is an attempt to identify the fundamentals of OUTWARD BOUND. Hopefully, it can help the reader to be a more qualified practitioner.

The paper is divided into three parts. The first is the backbone. It conceptualizes the process. The second part is a summarial schema of the process description. And the third part represents applications of the process used to describe, evaluate and design OUTWARD BOUND-like experiences. In all cases it has been written to the inquiring practitioner.

OUTWARD BOUND/Adventure Education

OUTWARD BOUND has become one of the leading exponents of adventure based education in America.[1] In the past, the six OUTWARD BOUND schools have been the custodians of the process. The term OUTWARD BOUND has become synonymous with adventure education. While the schools' popularity has not diminished, their ability to programatically supply the demand for an OUTWARD BOUND experience has. Their role is changing to that of the steward of the OUTWARD BOUND process.

Other institutions, in fact, over three hundred, ranging from correctional agencies to private schools, are adapting OUTWARD BOUND into their own on-going, on-site, indigenously staffed programs. Such a trend towards adaption necessitates the clarification of OUTWARD BOUND as a recognizable process.

A knowledge of the process will permit one to strengthen program. First, it helps refine what it is the program does, and, indeed, can do. Such refinement increases the probability of pertinent evaluation; necessary for responsive programming. Second, the clarification of process gives the adaptor predictive criteria with which to design goals and objectives, and the possibility to reorganize them as the needs of the parties involved in the program change.

THE PROCESS

It is important at the outset to distinguish what is meant by process from what is meant by program. People dealing with the OUTWARD BOUND process have a tendency to confuse program with process.

A process exists as a generalized series of conditions, events and objects which interact to produce a desired effect. A program, on the other hand, is a distillation of the process. It exists as a specific set of activities,

[1]Alfred S. Alschuler in "Psychological Education," Journal of Humanistic Psychology, VIX (Spring 1969), went so far as to identify OUTWARD BOUND as one of the nations prominent centers of 'Affective Education'.

sequence of events, for a specific population, which is limited in space and time.

Education has sought to identify the broad area of process and program. The overlap is considerable and at times inseparable. The following process definition is a conceptual view of adventure-based programs similar to OUTWARD BOUND.

Remember that a process exists as a generalized series of conditions, events, and objects which interact to produce a desired effect. Keeping this generic description in mind, the OUTWARD BOUND process functions as characteristic problem-solving tasks set in a prescribed physical and social environment which impell the participant to mastery of these tasks and which in turn serves to reorganize the meaning and direction of his life experience.

The "conditions" of the process are all the characteristics or features which qualify the events are objects. The events are the problem-solving tasks, and the objects are, of course, the learner and the instructor (the human element). Mastery and the reorganization of the meaning and direction of experience are the interaction.

By mastery is meant completing the tasks posed, as well as, the degree to which that contributes to future problem-solving ability. The completion of the tasks becomes the justification and resource for an attitude and ability towards mastery of future experience.

We will try and elaborate on this general definition schematically. First to be considered will be the learner. Second, will be the prescribed physical and social OUTWARD BOUND environment. Third, will be the characteristic OUTWARD BOUND problem-solving tasks. Fourth, will be the interaction which elicits the conditions for mastery. Then to be considered will be the instructor. Last to be explored will be the significance of mastery peculiar to OUTWARD BOUND and how it reorganizes the meaning and direction of a learner's experience.

## THE LEARNER

In considering the first object in the process, the learner, the question to examine is whether there are any conditions which must be in existence before OUTWARD BOUND can be adapted to fit the interests and capabilities of a participant.

The primary condition is motivation. It seems to be the crux. Motivation means thinking, feeling, and behaving as if there is something to be gained by participating. To quote Dewey, "Teaching may be compared to selling commodities. No one can sell unless someone buys...Since learning is something that the pupil has to do himself and for himself, the initiative lies with the learner."

In determining motivation there is the necessity for agreement and the sharing of sentiment (with its cognitive, affective, and psychomotor manifestations) on the usefulness of mastering the prescribed tasks. Such is the most obvious way of ascertaining motivation. The necessity for agreement or shared sentiment sheds light on reasons for excluding learners from the process who for reasons of mental health or mental development cannot share thoughts and feelings about participating. Also excluded from adventure based education are those with extreme physical disabilities eventhough they may have appropriate motivation. One must be cautioned that agreement or the sharing of sentiments need not be highly articulated or manifested. The ability to discern pertinent clues of agreement is a relative skill which some, because of insight on or experience with a group they are dealing with, are better able to exercise than others. Also the ingenious programmer can find ways of minimizing the handicaps of the physically disabled so that he can participate in the mastery peculiar to OUTWARD BOUND.

[2]John Dewey, Intelligence in the Modern World, edited by Joseph Ratner (New York: Modern Library, 1939), p. 614.

## PRESCRIBED PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The prescribed physical environment necessary to an OUTWARD BOUND experience is really nothing other than one the learner is not familiar with. Contrast is the key concept here. Contrast is used to see generality which tends to be overlooked by human beings in a familiar environment or to gain a new perspective on the old, familiar environment from which the learner comes. The learner's entry into a contrasting environment is the first step towards reorganizing the meaning and direction of his experience.

While inherently any contrasting environment will suffice, some have more educational possibilities than others and are to be preferred. The outdoors (the mountains, the sea, the desert, the swamps, and the plains) are especially potent in this regard.

First, the outdoors presents a highly stimulating environment. There is much to see, hear, touch and taste which is aesthetic. Yet the aestheticism of the outdoors is tempered by the presence of dangerous objects and conditions, the hints of which can be picked up by the discerning eye, ear, mouth, or skin. The outdoors is an excellent labfor conditioning one to refine the senses in the solution of problems in satisfying one's heirarchy of needs. An implication is that the discrimination of senses is an important ingredient in problem-solving, whatever the case.

Second, the outdoors is "neutral". Arbitrary and consequential rules are in existence which are not man-made; trespassers must accept and respect these rules regardless of preconceived notions if they want to survive. The lack of "intervening agents" for which "civilization has built a thousand buffers" encourages one to exercise self-awareness and self-responsibility. The possibilities of positively reconstructing the meaning and direction of experience by such exercise for most people is understandable.

Third, the tasks that one can perform outdoors tend to be straightforward (not necessarily easy or inconsequential). Their straightforwardness encourages mastery. This dynamic will be explained as we elaborate later on the characteristic problems posed in OUTWARD BOUND.

Other potent, contrasting environments are urban ones, such as, emergency wards, nursing homes, clinics for the physically, mentally and emotionally handicaped, cultural and ethnic enclaves, etc. Farms, apprentice shops and Indian reservations have been used as well. Realities such as proximity, accessibility, will probably warrant the selection of one over the other. Still the ideal is to select the one which poses the most contrast with the most educational possibilities for the most number of learners.

PRESCRIBED SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

The unique social environment is the inclusion of a "ten-group". The "ten-group" is a concept for an interdependent peer group of anywhere from seven to fifteen who have a common objective.[3] The ten-group" is the latter day version of the old hunting group that hunted for the band. It enjoys some unique properties:

1. The "ten-group" is large enough to have and to accommodate diversified behavior types; yet, it is small enough that cliques based on these types are not likely to form.

2. The "ten-group " is large enough to have conflict; yet, it is small enough to manageably resolve it.

3. And the "ten-group" is large enough and the nature of its common objective (mastery of the tasks in the case of OUTWARD BOUND) important enough that there exists a collective consciousness or bond along with the individual consciousness of the participating peers.

[3]The "ten-man" group is perhaps better known as primary group.

Pulling this together, the "ten-group" represents a social environment that promotes individual decision-making which at the same time has the support of a peer group and which takes into consideration the wishes and welfare of the group. In short, individuality within a cooperative framework is the standard produced with the inclusion of a "ten-group".

The use of the "ten-group" in the OUTWARD BOUND process recognizes man's need for reciprocity. Reciprocity is an exchange system where by strengths and weaknesses can be traded off within a group. Reciprocity is a way of creating order; there is survival value in identifying the total strengths, weaknesses, and various skills of the group. Abilities can then be exchanged to a point where all the people contribute to the problem-solving pool of alternatives. Jerome Bruner has hypothesized that reciprocity is an intrinsic motivation that has much to do with the will to learn. "Where joint action is needed, where reciprocity is required for the group to attain an objective, then there seem to be processes that carry the individual along into learning, sweep him into competence that is required in the setting of the group."[4] The need for reciprocity existing with the inclusion of the "ten-group" in OUTWARD BOUND must not be underestimated. The exchange of one's abilities in intimate, socially acceptable cooperation with others is not readily available to people today. It's exercise in OUTWARD BOUND is a return to cooperative, enhancing social interaction, which reorganizes the meaning of most people's experience, since such reciprocity is difficult to arrange today.

## CHARACTERISTIC PROBLEM-SOLVING TASKS

It sounds prosaic to identify "characteristic problem-solving tasks" as the primary event in the OUTWARD BOUND process; but that is what activities common to adventure education, such as, rock climbing, rafting, rappelling,

[4]Jerome S. Bruner, Toward A Theory of Instruction (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1966), p. 125.

solo, camping, food rationing, distribution of equipment, routefinding, allocation of leadership roles, etc. represent. Let us list and expound on the characteristic nature of the tasks. Their inclusion creates the conditions for mastery. The characteristics are:

1. ORGANIZED. OUTWARD BOUND problems are intended to be planned, programmed, and managed. The directness of supervision is a function of the risks inherently involved or perceived by the instructor and the skill/maturation of the problem solvers.

In taking responsibility for the organization of the problem-solving tasks, the assumption is made that not all experience is necessarily educative, that it can be miseducative. The problem, as stated by John Dewey, is "establishing conditions that arouse curiosity, strengthen initiative, and set up desires and purposes that are sufficiently intense to carry a person over dead places in the future.."[5] By organizing, OUTWARD BOUND prescribes the educational experience.

2. INCREMENTAL. OUTWARD BOUND problems ideally are introduced incrementally in terms of their complexity and consequence. To the participant, it may appear to be quite the opposite, as he is impelled to solve problems which he has doubts about the ability to master. It is just that practioners of the OUTWARD BOUND process assume that men are more ready to overcome obstacles than they think they are. Still problems are introduced sequentially from an easier kind of problem to a harder kind of problem or task. This progression has its historical antecedents in apprenticeships which used to be the rule of thumb for someone learning a new trade. The existence of incrementality presupposes a needs assessment for the learner. Assessing needs helps insure the continuity of the OUTWARD BOUND experience in terms of where the learner is coming from educationally and what educational needs of his the OUTWARD BOUND course must

[5]John Dewey, Experience and Education (New York: Collier Books, 1963), p. 38.

cultivate. To quote Dewey again, "Responsibility for selecting objective conditions (organization) carries with it the responsibility for understanding the needs and capacities of the individuals who are learning at the present time. It is not enough that certain materials and methods have proved effective with other individuals at other times. There must be a reason for thinking that they will function in generating an experience that has educative quality with particular individuals at a particular time."[6]

3. CONCRETE. OUTWARD BOUND problems are concrete, i.e., recognizable as problems limited in space and time. For example, if one is outdoors in a forest with night descending and storm clouds brewing the necessity to rig a shelter during the night is unmistakable.

The use of concrete tasks is designed to complement the learners needs for competence which has been identified as an intrinsic motivation for learning. According to Jerome Bruner, feelings of accomplishment require tasks that have a beginning and an end, i.e., concrete ones. He concludes that "unless there is some meaningful unity in what we are doing and some way of telling how we are doing, we are not likely to strive to excell ourselves."[7] So the inclusion of concrete problems increases the probability of mastery.

4. MANAGEABLE. Not only are the problems concrete, they are manageable. OUTWARD BOUND problems can be solved with the use of common sense and the application of basic skills which have been taught (incrementality). The trick is to introduce tasks, the manageability of which appears somewhat doubtful to the learner.

Here too the manageability of the problems is designed to satisfy the need for competence. It is quite simple; we get interested and sustain our energy on things we get good at. And it is unlikely that the problems would be

[6] ibid., p. 45
[7] Bruner, op. cit., p. 119

manageable if they were not organized and based on a needs assessment of the learner. The characteristics complement one another.

5. CONSEQUENTIAL. Not only will the learner recognize the problem and arrive at a solution, he will experience mentally, emotionally, and physically how well he has solved it. If, for instance, an OUTWARD BOUND group is presented with a distribution of food for a specified number of days, they must ration the food properly or go hungry eventually. The point is that OUTWARD BOUND tasks have real consequences not vicarious ramifications. In this sense, they are worthwhile. This situation tends to increase one's power of concentration and selection in absorbing pertinent information and demonstrating the mastery of it.

In addition, the consequence of the tasks with the risks to life and limb elicits man's curiousity, another of the intrinsic motives for learning.[8]

6. HOLISTIC. OUTWARD BOUND problems are holistic, that is, their solution require the fullest complement of an individual's mental, emotional, and physical resources. For instance, to climb a mountain one must figure out a route, want to climb the route, and actually get on the mountain and physically climb it. One without the others is insufficient to complete the task. This characteristic coupled with the others produces provacative problems; the solutions to which have dramatic and immediate impact on the meaning and direction of a person's experience. We will elaborate on this further when we explore the significance of OUTWARD BOUND mastery.

## THE INTERACTION

Naturally, when one places oneself in an unfamiliar physical and social setting with a host of worthwhile, unfamiliar, unavoidable, necessary and reasonable tasks to complete, some trepidation may occur. There is the possibility of lowering or raising one's opinion of oneself. The learner experiences

[8]ibid., p. 114.

dissonance or lack of harmony. But his dissonance is adaptive, i.e., remedial. He will not stay this way forever, he must do something to reachieve harmony. It is this presence of anxiety that impells a learner in the OUTWARD BOUND process to tackle the tasks posed. It is the characteristic nature of the OUTWARD BOUND problems with their concreteness, incrementality, organization, manageability, consequentialness, and holisticity, which permit the learner the highest probability of successfully mastering the tasks. In short, the characteristic nature of the problems represents a supportive environment for resolving his anxiety through mastery. It is this factor which tips the balance in favor of mastery as the adaption to the dissonance.

The theraputic use of anxiety (adaptive dissonance) has been widely documented. The implication is that no change or adaption can occur without dissonance. Kierkegaard, the philosopher, in the same vein wrote, "To venture causes anxiety, but not to venture is to lose oneself."[9]

So descriptively OUTWARD BOUND represents a anxiety resolution model consisting of specific objects, events, and conditions that promote resolution through mastery of problems posed.

## THE INSTRUCTOR

The instructor is an instrumental part of the process. The roles and qualities that an instructor brings to bear in facillitating mastery are sophisticated. While fairly easy to describe, it is not easy to find an individual who can wear all the hats of an OUTWARD BOUND type instructor.

Throughout the course there are many instances when the instructor acts as a translator. The instructor stands between, bridges as it were, the OUTWARD BOUND experience and the learner. He also attempts to bridge the learner and that environment to which the learner must return. He restates

[9]Rollo May, The Meaning of Anxiety. (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1950), p. 234.

or interpretes into familiar language the experience, in so doing increasing the reorganization of the experience.

The instructor acts as well as an initiator. Experiences encountered on the course are largely the result of his engineering. In organizing or initiating he constructs situations conducive to the exploration of various alternatives to problems, and forestalls or curcumvents potentially miseducative events.

By necessity of running operations in a special environment, such as the outdoors, the instructor is a trainer -- he must be able to transmit the skills necessary for functioning in that environment. Not only must he be technically proficient at the skills encountered in negotiating the physical environment, he must be able to facilitate the affective growth of the individuals through their mastery of the skills. This requires the ability to be emphatic, genuine, concrete, and confrontive when necessary.

Any situation engaged in must be maintained through to the resolution of that situation. The instructor is a maintainer. Part of his skill is in making moves towards resolution; his decisions are based on the continum of the learner's experience, i.e. what his short and long-term growth needs are.

By virtue of the power given to the instructor by the program's organization and possessed by the instructor according to his experience and skill, the instructor is the authority figure. Within the domain of the "ten-group" the instructor's word is final. It almost goes without saying that the authoritative nature of being an instructor carries with it the responsibility of an understanding of the interaction of the various OUTWARD BOUND process elements to the service of the learner. He has the final responsibility for effecting the learning of new attitudes, values, and behavior patterns. In effect, he is a guardian, continually assessing the state of each individual and the group to be able to encounter each problem with a more than reasonable chance of success.

Lastly, the instructor is an exemplar. To be most effective in this role he must exercise these characteristics considered instrumental in enabling the students to employ alternatives to problems and to transfering successful alternatives to future experience. The qualities that come to mind are reflection, openness, esteem, and acceptance of others. The idea is not to be the know-it-all but the exemplar of spirited, insightful, compassionate problem-solving. "It is like becoming a speaker of a language one shares with somebody. The language of that interaction becomes a part of oneself, and the standards of the style and clarity that one adopts for that interaction become a part of one's own standards".[10]

## MASTERY AND ITS MEANING

We have just identified and described the objects, events, and interaction of the OUTWARD BOUND process. The last and most important thing to consider is the significance of it all. What does mastery in OUTWARD BOUND do for a participant? It reorganizes the meaning and direction of a person's experience. How does OUTWARD BOUND mastery do this?

The answer is deceivingly simple: the learner finds it rewarding to solve reasonable (i.e. concrete, manageable), and consequential problems holistically within a supportive peer group and in a stimulating environment. It makes one feel good about oneself and those who have assisted. Since the learner does not have the opportunity to master such problems ordinarily, he enlarges and has a more congruent perception of himself (reorganization of the meaning of experience).[11] These new attitudes, values, (affective skills) make us more likely equiped and ready to tackle subsequent problems (reorganization of the

[10]Bruner, op. cit., p. 124

[11]Such reorganization is most often measured by psychological instruments that ascertain changes in concepts, such as, self-awareness, self-esteem, self-responsibility and acceptance of others.

direction of experience). If one does something he has wanted to do, which he could not, or has not done before, he has reorganized the meaning or significance of his experience or existence and the ability to direct the course of subsequent experience.

It is rewarding to master OUTWARD BOUND because it presents the kinds of problems the human being is designed to solve. If one looks at our cognitive (thinking), affective (emotional), and psychomotor (physical) taxonomies (levels of complexity), it can be seen that they are arranged and function in a symbiotic, problem-solving matrix.[12] They symbolize the parts of our behavior and are designed to complement the action of one another in resolving our problems.

Take the cognitive domain first. Its levels are knowledge (rote memorization): comprehension (putting the memorized information into one's own language): application (demonstrating understanding of information congruently): analysis (appraising the interrelationships of different sources of information): synthesis (guessing how different sources of information can fit together to solve something): an evaluation (appraising the reliability and validity of the preceeding hypothesis). Now the affective domain. The levels are receiving (awareness of sensory inputs); responding (involves willingness to consider); valuing (initiating a response to a situation or stimulus); voluntarily with a set of attitudes); organization (sustaining an appropriate attitudinal response to a situation or stimulus); and finally characterization (where one is totally absorbed in responding with a set of attitudes or values in a situation). Last the psychomotor domain or taxonomy. The levels are perception (sensory awareness of stimulus); preparation (involves readiness to perform); orientation (deciding appropriate response); and pattern (responding with some

[12]This idea represents a synthesis of a system of classifying behavior devised by Dr. Benjamin S. Bloom and his associates. The system is known as Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives.

learned responses); and last performance (involving a skillful, neuromuscular response).

Now let us examine a typical OUTWARD BOUND problem, such as, the "wall" (which a "ten-group" must scale without the aid of anything but their hearts, heads and hands). It can be seen how the different domains of human functioning are designed to complement each other in a problem-solving matrix.

They are presented the problem (receiving), (perception), and (knowledge). They then translate the problem into their own language (comprehension), accept the problem (respond), and prepare to solve it (preparation). In doing the latter they might gather around one another to confer, cinch up their belts, etc. Having applied or seen the application of various bodily configurations before (application), they begin to plan by analyzing all the variables involved (analysis), to initiate the plans with a set of values (valuing -- it may be to solve the problem honestly without the use of any gimmicks), and they begin to act out various options physically (orientation). Some may test the wall, some may lift others to ascertain strengths, etc. Then they decide on a plan (synthesis), follow through on it (organization), and put it into action (pattern). Finally, they are totally involved and committed to its execution (performance and characterization), and as they master the task they inevitably (evaluate) it, (their plan either succeeds or it does not).

This brief expose of a complex set of interactions demonstrates how the mastery of OUTWARD BOUND problems exercises the fullest complement of our mental, emotional, and physical resources. There is survival value in such exercises because we are functioning at our most productive level for that situation. Mastery in the OUTWARD BOUND process involves the fullest Gestalt of the learner. Such development by its very nature reorganizes the meaning and direction of a person's experience.

How lasting is this reorganization? Is it sustained over the long haul? There is no patent answer to this. No educative experience can stand by itself, no matter how worthwnile. Education is or should be a cotinuous process. A process, such as OUTWARD BOUND, should not be singular. There must be a continum of such experiences throughout a person's life. "Government, business, art, religion, all social institutions have a meaning, a purpose. That purpose is to set free and to develop the capacities of human individuals without respect to race, sex, class or economic status. And all of this is one with saying that the test for their value is the extent to which they educate every individual into the full stature of his possibility."[13]

POSTSCRIPT

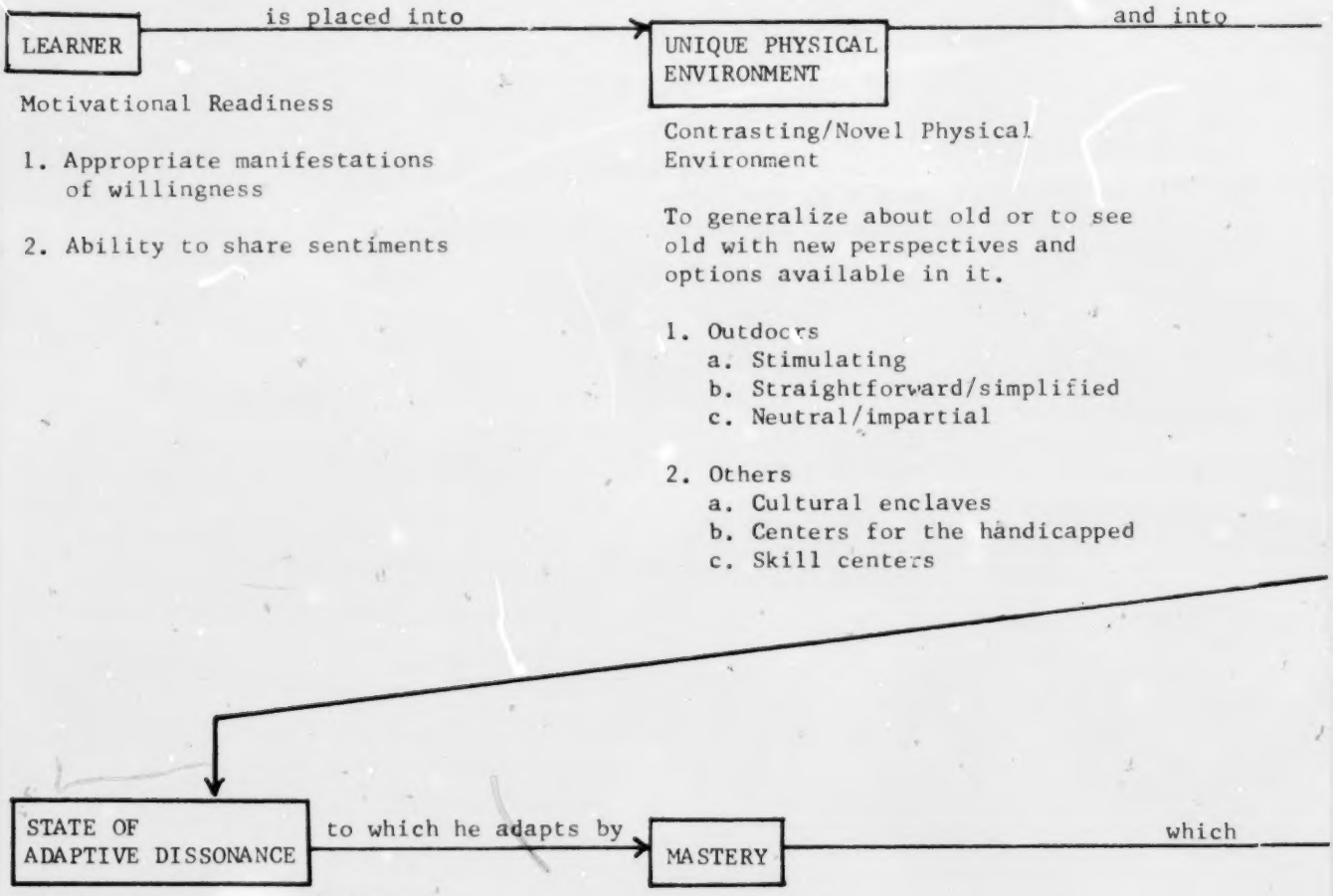
In the development of organizations and institutions there is a time for codification and demystification. There is simultaneously an attraction to keeping the process mysterious. Any codification of the process tends, by its simplification, to deny access to mystery. Once the idea is delineated, its ability to move out of that mold is decreased. It can be conjectured that a procedural ossification takes place shortly after writing down the elements of an experience. The program can become a closed circuit whereby detractors picking up on points not included in the articulated process, though in fact incorporated, single out "alternative" possibilities. In short, we want this exploration to be taken as a starting point for further exploration.

We can conceive of a Zen fable which begins with two Zen students standing in the middle of a bridge which spans a river. "How deep is the River Zen?", they ponder. Just then the Zen Master approaches. One of the students asks the Zen Master, "Master, how deep is the River Zen?" "Here, I'll show you", replies the Master. With that he picks up the student and tosses him into the river.

[13]Dewey, Intelligence in the Modern World, p. 629.

# THE OUTWARD BOUND

## INSTRUCTOR INTERVENES THROUGHOUT PROCESS AS A TRANSLATOR; INITIATO



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PROCESS

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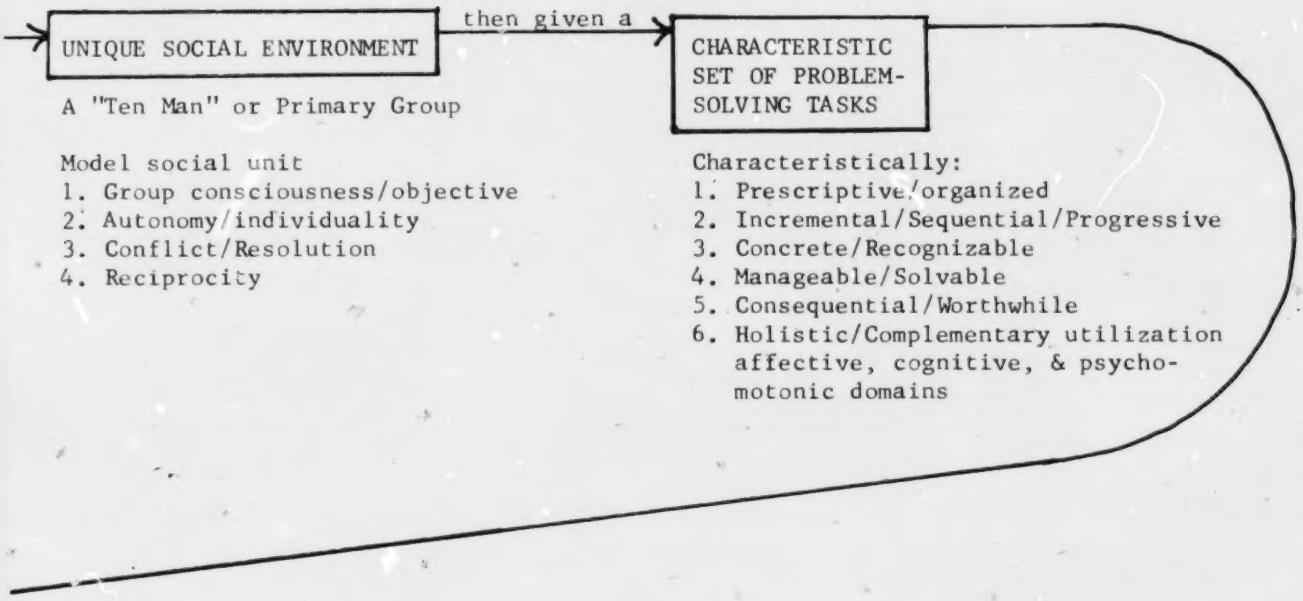
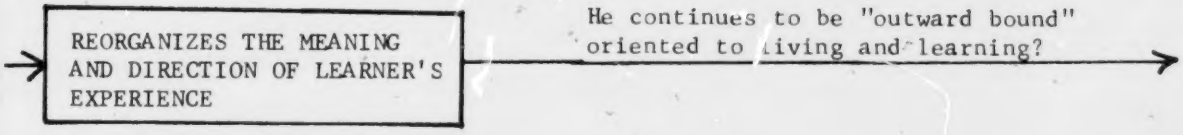



A "Ten Man" or Primary Group

Model social unit
1. Group consciousness/objective
2. Autonomy/individuality
3. Conflict/Resolution
4. Reciprocity

Characteristically:
1. Prescriptive/organized
2. Incremental/Sequential/Progressive
3. Concrete/Recognizable
4. Manageable/Solvable
5. Consequential/Worthwhile
6. Holistic/Complementary utilization affective, cognitive, & psychomotonic domains


REORGANIZES THE MEANING AND DIRECTION OF LEARNER'S EXPERIENCE
He continues to be "outward bound" oriented to living and learning?

I. Meaning in terms of increased:
   a. Self-awareness
   b. Self-esteem
   c. Belongingness

II. Direction in terms of:
   Repeated "modeling" problem-solving behavior

## UTILIZING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE OUTWARD BOUND PROCESS TO DESIGN AND EVALUATE DERIVATIVE EXPERIENCE

To further clarify the process described in the first two sections, and to demonstrate the usefulness of understanding it, two experiences, much different in terms of student populations, environments, time frames, activities, etc. will be critiqued in terms of their distillation of the OUTWARD BOUND principles. This critique will demonstrate their essential similarity. It will also demonstrate a method of consistently and comprehensively designing or evaluating OUTWARD BOUND adaptions.

LOCATION: Marble

| STAFF: | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Course Director | Jerry Golins |
| | Instructor | Tom Stich |
| | Assistant | Jamie Katz, Rory Frazier, Larry Saghy |
| | Logistics | Lorrie Babcock |

COLORADO STATE REFORMATORY COURSE Sept. 23-Oct. 7, 1975

TRIP ITINERARY

| DAY | ACTIVITIES | |
|---|---|---|
| | A.M. | P.M. |
| 1 | Arrival. Course Director's introductory talk; "quiet walk"; equipment issue | Wall and beam; ropes course; campcraft; debriefing |
| 2 | Run and dip | Rappel; rockcraft; top rope climbing; campcraft; night hike back to base camp |
| 3 | Map and compass | Route finding from Marble to Yule Creek; campcraft; debriefing |
| 4 | Trek to Marble Quarry; rappel into Quarry; spelunk out of quarry | Trek up to Whitehouse Cabin (approximately 3 miles with 2000' altitude gain) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 5 | Readings; trek along Treasury Ridge into Bear Basin to connect with resupply (approximately 5 miles)<br>Map and Compass<br>Trek down Bear Basin (3 miles)..... | Snowcraft |
| 6 | Resupply at Crystal<br>letter writing | Unstructured afternoon;<br>readings |
| 7 | Route finding unaccompanied from Lead King to Snowmass Lake via Trailriders (approximately 7 miles 2000' elevation gain and loss) | |
| 8 | Climb to be in position to climb | Snowmass via snowbowl (14,000' peak) |
| 9 | Return to Prospector Springs | Unstructured afternoon (fishing, basking in sun, etc.) |
| 10 | Trek over Meadow Mt. to North Fork (approximately 7 miles) | sauna |
| 11 | Solo | |
| 12 | Off solo | Begin unaccompanied from Silver Creek to Love's Cabin (7 miles) |
| 13 | Unaccompanied finals from Love's to East Fork at Schofield Park via Frigid Air Pass (8 miles) | |
| 14 | Marathon (9miles); debriefing (patrol and individual) | Steak fry; awards; departure |

## I. THE LEARNER

In selecting students, motivational readiness was the criterion which we tried to competently assess. An offshoot was the necessity of inmates being close to parole so that motivational readiness would not be self-defeating. It was reasoned that providing someone with a "de-institutionalizing" experience only to drop him back into the pit with a long stretch remaining would be counterproductive and perhaps inhumane.

Selection activities consisted of the following:

1. The participation of two CSR staff on a preceeding 23 day OUTWARD BOUND practicum to have a nucleus of informed CSR staff.
2. Presentation of a film to the general prison population, managed by the two CSR staff who had attended the Outward Bound practicum.
3. Preliminary screening interviews focusing on proximity to parole and motivational readiness by the same CSR staff.
4. Final selection interviews conducted by CSR staff and all Colorado Outward Bound School staff for course.

The emphasis throughout was on straightforward details of course activities and staff expectations of student performance. The expectations were that they cooperate with their peers so as to get through in one piece (reciprocity), take a look at their behavior on the course (reconstruct the significance of it), and most importantly that they attempt every activity or challenge posed, that in this respect they have the choice to choose all of Outward Bound or none of Outward Bound (willingness). We also mentioned that we would not ask them to do something that we would not or could not do ourselves (instructor as exemplar).

We screened some out whose pathological proclivities might require clinical intervention or who seemed to have a fanciful notion of Outward Bound. A premium was put on honesty and character. Of the sixteen selected only one was later asked to leave the course who for reasons of obesity and low motivation became an untenable liability. In his case, CSR and Colorado Outward Bound School staff indulged in wishful thinking in originally selecting him.

Such an extensive effort to assess willingness was done because, given the nature of incarceration, there might be more than normal grounds for self delusion or deceit surrounding participation in OUTWARD BOUND.

II. UNIQUE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Obviously the Snowmass Marron Bells Wilderness area abounding as it is with opportunities for human release stood in vivid contrast to the deadening confines of the prison.

III. THE UNIQUE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

The primary groups that students were organized into were a stunning contrast as well to the social habits of imprisonment where prisoners survive by being: 1) selfish; 2) threatening or submissive; 3) deceitful; 4) dependent. Given their ignorance about outdoor survival and their willingness to master the experience, they had to be assertive without being predatory, negotiate more than dominate, and give as well as take.

IV. CHARACTERISTIC SET OF PROBLEMS WHICH FACILITATE MASTERY

A. Prescriptive/Organized

1. Course was shortened to fourteen days
   - more in line with institutional constraints at CSR
   - easier on staff (attrition on such course high)
   - compact time frame ( no need for dead space)
   - consistent with student attention span

2. Ex-felon and CSR staff members included in field staff along with regular COBS staff to insure most considerate student needs assessing both before and during the course.

3. Activities and parameters of student choice decided by staff.

B. Progressive

1. Base camp used initially

   - provided a permanent reference for students (serve as a bridge between their familiar environments and the outdoors)
   - allows for more thorough and safe assessing of student skills by staff

2. Short term, high impact activities, such as, ropes course, initiatives, rock climbing and rapelling conducted initially, then the trekking introduced

   - bolsters motivation to persevere through whole course because activities elicit curiosity, are very concrete, and do not require delaying gratification (which usually requires a more internalized commitment)
   - accelerates mental, emotional, and physical conditioning

C. Concrete: See list of course activities

D. Manageable

1. Course shortened to fourteen days

2. Original linear course design altered at first resupply to a more compact, circular one which would give us greater choices for activities with greater safety and time margins.

3. Only one peak climb scheduled the snowbowl side of Snowmass (arduous but safe with exposed but short sections with a variety of boulder hopping, trekking, snow climbing)

4. Solo shortened to a day and a half
   - incarcerated folks are used to loneliness not aloneness constantly surrounded by masses and peers, the solitude required of a lengthy solo overwhelming
   - enough time to contemplate course behavior and pose future directions

5. Finals changed to a day and a half unaccompanied expedition in some patrols
   - to demonstrate competence as unit without the direct supervision of instructor appropriate sequential step

E. Holistics--see list of activities

Once again problems encountered in a natural environment because of its straightforward/simplified, concrete/tangible qualities require

an inhabitant to comprehensively exercise all his behavioral domains. Super-technological society with its complexity has required more specialized responses (such as, driving a car, managing a business, learning a field of study, etc.)

F. Worthwhile-see list of activities

Here too one must see the consequence of OUTWARD BOUND problem-solving holistically. For instance in facing a rock climbing problem there can be as much anxiety about falling and hurting oneself, as looking "foolish" in the eyes of others, or in being frustrated at not figuring out a way up. Quite literally the challenges are worthwhile, because in tackling them, the participant has made a holistic investment that is important to him. A simple yardstick for measuring the worth of the activities (or the student investment) is the perseverance, determination, and emotional release connected with the resolution of the tasks.

## V. ADAPTIVE DISSONANCE, MASTERY AND THE ATTENDANT RECONSTRUCTION

There were manifestations of obvious dissonance: a student planning an escape during his day of solo, another questioning the peak climb halfway up, still another upset by his "street" habits compromising his social acceptability. Likewise, there were obvious manifestations of mastery with reorganized feelings of selfhood and subsequent life planning.

To list a few:

- twelve out of fourteen finished (one left due to stretched ligaments, another was asked to leave who was obese)
- a black involved in a murder of an anglo mentioned that the course was the first time he had ever respected anglos
- a Chicano, father of four, twice married, 20 years old, armed robber, upon receiving his diploma exclaiming, "You know I've never gotten any diploma, it feels good".
- the same man, never having raced before, finishing fifth in a ten-mile marathon after falling three times
- the young Chicano, armed robber with a habit, thinking of escape during solo, telling himself "no" for the first time in his life
- anglo, bank robber, over eight years spent in various prisons, deciding against turning back during the trudge up Snowmass because his biggest problem on the outside is persevering through the low spots
- the same man, as well as others, contributing some dramatic poetry
- an anglo stating that it was the first time he has satisfactorily talked through conflict
- a cocaine dealer detailing the stupidity of his offense and outlining his plan for the future
- two fathers pledging that their sons will never grow up with them behind bars
- numerous folks disavowing their "Mister Tough Guy" acts

## VI. PROGRAM STAFF

Staff were selected for their ability to translate, initiate, maintain, exemplify, and be the authority figure in the process. As mentioned earlier, two "insiders" were included to beef up the COBS staff's "translating" ability. In addition, staff behavior especially critical with an inmate

population were outlined. They are worth mentioning as they all elaborated the categories of a good instruction mentioned above:

a. Do not make presumptions about what students know, understand or retain. Many offenders have poor conceptual skills and come from cultural backgrounds unfamiliar with the outdoors.

b. Keep activities practical and sequential--relate activities to what is coming up. Incarcerated types need immediate, practical, and positive reinforcement; they need to see the "payoff".

c. Be demonstrative as well as verbal. Once again, conceptual skills lacking in many offenders.

d. Teach by example. Many "incarcerants" have troubles with authority figures, so you must demonstrate a constructive authority model, i.e., one who gets respect and compliance, not because of the role, but because of what he knows and does.

e. Be straightforward. Sarcasm and bull slinging is what they are used to, they do not need any more of it.

f. Be available to talk. Negotiation and counseling is not a hallmark of the "joint" or their lives outside it.

g. Know what you are willing and unwilling to negotiate, such as, fighting or choosing to do activities when comfortable. People used to structure need some boundaries, especially folks with poor track records at self-management. In this regard, the expression of reasonable boundaries is a form of caring.

h. Be an interventionist, whether it be confrontively, empathetically, genuinely, self-disclosively, congruently, or a combination thereof. There will be conflict which is not to be avoided, it will surface, and the results might be violently explosive. Intervene at the outset as a counselor, not after things get out of hand like a prison guard.

i. Expect the unexpected. One tries on new behavior patterns in Outward Bound which demand more self-responsibility than a lot of these folks are used to. The possibility of new behavioral choices with the concomitant prospect of failure is a difficult burden for many of these folks to entertain without periodically fleeing back to old, dysfunctional, albeit familiar habits.

## VII. POSTSCRIPT

The long term benefits of this reorganizing experience is at present unknown. Many of these men upon parole will return to debilitating socio-economic situations. Common sense tells us that a plant raised in an inhospitable environment when given the requisite nutrition (sunlight, water, soil supplements) will grow if given the nutrition in time. It will wither once again if it is returned to the inhospitable environment. People are no different, they need a sustaining environment. The difference is that they are more capable of directing their experiences (or are they?) than most other animate objects. There is a hope therefore that an OUTWARD BOUND experience will impel the participant to subsequently extricate himself out of debilitating situations or avoid them. How one can isolate the OUTWARD BOUND experience as the critical variable in this process is impossible. We must be content with limited correlations in assessing the lasting benefits.

OBI Trustees New York City Program

(May 3&4, 1975)

This experience while substantially different in terms of population, site selection, activities and time frame iseessentially the same. Since not having been directly involved, it will be difficult to go into as great a depth in evaluating its use of OUTWARD BOUND learning theory as the CSR course, but we can flesh out the essentials nonetheless.

The course plan:

Overview: WELCOME to the OBI Trustees New York City Program.

We hope in some 28 hours to involve you in situations and experiences that will lead you to increased awareness of the potentials and problems of New York City.

And, we hope that through this city experience, you will come to new individual and group awareness as well.

This 'field kit' gives you your master field program. This is the schedule of activities we will all be involved in until Sunday evening. It is up to you and your group to participate as actively as possible throughout the entire program--from interpreting assignments, through maintaining schedules, to undertaking the tasks as set.

Good experiencing.

Paul Walker
NYC Program Coordinator

BRIEFING

Field Kit: This 'kit' contains your master program of activities; the specific tasks assigned to those activities; and resource maps and time-tables to get you to the activity sites.

General Notes:

1. Time Frame-is a critical element if the entire program is to be completed. Therefore, before setting off for an activity, check to see how much time you have been allowed to transit.
You may be able to walk between some activities and enjoy the neighborhood. Alternatively, a bus will hurry you along as well as let you see. Generally, for longer distances, the subway is fastest.

2. Activity tasks-are designed to keep you on the alert to observe and record-things you are seeing for the first time, or from a new vantage point; also opportunities to enjoy the city, cultural and people activities; peace and quiet.
Try to keep your notes representative of your own feelings and discoveries.

START

ACTIVITY 1: BELLEVUE HOSPITAL

Time Frame: Report in 1930 hours
Check out 2400

Location : Bellevue Hospital
1st Av at 27th Street

Contact : Mr. Robert Burns
Duty Office, Admin. Bldg.
(561-4438)

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Activity Tasks:
1.1:Outline on your map the route you will take to Bellevue.
1.2:Observe neighborhood nitelife as you travel. Jot down highlights.
1.3:Note first impressions of both the physical plant and the staff.
1.4:ON DUTY. Once an hour or so, jot down vivid impressions, especially people vignettes. Strongly portray the staff member.

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Jots: (This space was included at the end of each activity task.)

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ACTIVITY 2: BED DOWN

Time Frame: Report in 2430 hours
Check out 0630

Location :

Contact :

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Activity Tasks:

2.1:Outline your transit route on your map.
2.2:Relax and have a good night.

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ACTIVITY 3: BOULDERING/ROCK CLIMBING

Time Frame: Report in 0700 hours
Check out 0845 "

Activity Tasks:

3.1: Map your transit route to the park.
3.2: Observe neighborhoods as you travel.
3.3: Note your feelings about this neighborhood.
3.4: Good bouldering :

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ACTIVITY 4: BRIDGE WALK

Time Frame: Start at 0900 hours
Finish at 1030 "

Location : George Washington Bridge
168th St. & Broadway

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Activity Tasks:

4.1: Map your transit route to the bridge.
4.2: Catch a bus to the NJersey side.
4.3: Buy a snack for under 75¢
4.4: Use the South Walkway and walk back across the bridge to NY.
4.5: Walk alone for at least half the way across. Let this be meditative experience. Observe east, south, west.
4.6: For 2 minutes stand and image lower Manhatten 200 years on, in 2175.
4.7: After you walk the bridge, sit down, close your eyes for 30 seconds, then record your impressions.

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ACTIVITY 5: LUNCH SERVICE

Time Frame: Report in 1045 hours
Check out 1300 "

Location : Nutrition & Health Center for Sr. Citizens (Church St. Paul & St. Andrew) 263 West 86th Street

Contact : Mr. Max Groeschler, (EN2-3179)

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Activity Tasks:

5.1: Map your transit route.
5.2: Note your feelings about this place.
5.3: Observe the attitude of the people here. Note.
5.4: ON DUTY. Talk with at least one man and then one woman on 3 topics of current concern. Note their interest in the topic; the intensity of their feeling; their willingness to concern themselves with current and future events. Ask them for their full names so you can quote them.
5.5: Eat a good lunch!

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ACTIVITY 6: SUBWAYING

Time Frame: Report in 1400 hours
Check out 1600 "

Location : NYC Transit Auth. H.Q.
370 Jay St., Brooklyn

Contact : Mr. Dennis Wendling
(330-3750)

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Activity Tasks:

6.1: Detail your route to Brooklyn.
6.2: Determine 3 specific objectives of the NYCTA. Question their success or failure.
6.3: ON DUTY. Relate to the world of work underground--the people who run and service it, the sights and sounds of it. Note highlights.
6.4: Carry out an in-depth interview with your train conductor.
6.5: From your new viewpoint analyse your view of the above worlders--the riders.

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ACTIVITY 7: YOGA

Time Frame: Report in 1630 hours
Float out 1800 "

Location : Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Center
243 24th Street

Contact : Swami Maha Devananda
(255-4560)

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I. THE LEARNER

With the experience being a voluntary one for OUTWARD BOUND Incorporated trustees we can assume that there was a high level of motivational readiness.

II. THE UNIQUE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Undoubtedly, the participants had spent considerable time in New York City or other urban areas. But most likely this time had been in the service of their professional goals or with business acquaintances/friends. They had not had dramatic, first hand experiences in the seamy side of the inner city, with the misery of the inner city, with the service systems designed to remediate conditions, with the "free spirit" of inner city; so in effect the physical environment was unique to them.

III. THE UNIQUE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

As their physical environment was unique, so too was their predicament of negotiating the tasks outlined for them in primary groups. The common objective of survival is perhaps an even more omnipresent catalyst for reciprocity in the inner city given the acknowledged dangers of inner city existence than in an outdoor setting. Their interdependence could give them a telescopic perception of each other's strengths and limitations and how to complement one another to resolve common tasks. More than likely, their previous contact with one another as trustees had not been as intense.

## IV. CHARACTERISTIC SET OF PROBLEMS WHICH FACILITATE MASTERY

### A. Prescriptive/Organized

Reviewing the field kit, it is easy to visualize the amount of structure/organization that went into this experience.

### B. Progressive

It might be argued that starting a student off at seven thirty p.m. in the emergency ward of an inner-city hospital, working there until midnight, then having to find a place to "crash" afterwards is far from "progressive". But one must remember to evaluate the progressiveness of OUTWARD BOUND problems in terms of the unique capacities of the student population in question. The OBI trustees were assuredly an energetic, enterprising lot. They had many successful models of previous mastery to utilize in mastering the New York City Program.

### C. Concrete

The activities did have a clearcut beginning and end; in fact, each activity was broken down into sub-objectives. The apparent exception is the one concerning "Yoga" with the inclusion of such obtuse objectives as "knowledge/liberation/peace". This is only a more spirited way of giving a cerebral bunch of folks an opportunity to collect their thoughts through

repose (i.e. solo)--it provided the opportunity to conceptualize the reorganization of the meaning of their experience that had taken place.

D. Manageable

There were no tasks that someone of the equivalent mental, emotional, and physical resources as the trustees could not have mastered with commitment.

E. Consequential

Every activity had a risk of some kind (providing first aid regardless of the circumstances at the emergency ward, negotiating with the denizens of the "streets", dealing with potentially guilt-evoking situations, associating with the culturally different, etc.).

F. Holistic

Every activity had an emotional, mental, and physical complement, though perhaps not as complementary as those associated with the outdoors.

## V. ANXIETY, MASTERY, AND RECONSTRUCTION

Not having participated in, nor having available documentation, we can only speculate about the results of this experience. The questions would be: 1) Did they all complete the course? 2) Were there trying moments? 3) Did they experience feelings of dread, relief, release, communion, resolve, satisfaction, etc.?

Could one notice or communicate different behavioral patterns or inclinations as a result of the experience?

## VI. SUMMARY

An attempt has been made to describe a process called OUTWARD BOUND and to apply that perception in designing and evaluating experiences associated with OUTWARD BOUND. It is only seen as a start in clarifying, elaborating, and developing OUTWARD BOUND.